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Grant applications for community scholarships now available

OLYMPIA - Applications are now available for a program that has helped hundreds of Washington students attend college through the efforts of community groups that raise money for scholarships.

The Community Scholarship Matching Grant, administered by the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, encourages such community fund-raising efforts.

The program provides matching grants of \$2,000 to community-based 501 (C)(3) organizations that raise at least the same amount for college scholarships through local fund-raising initiatives. In awarding the grants, state legislation gives preference to organizations that affiliate with Dollars for Scholars, a national network of hundreds of community scholarship foundations across the country.

“Empowering local communities to help local students achieve their educational goals is the essence of this program,” said Sen. Ken Jacobsen, D-Seattle, who helped lead the effort to secure state funding and is chairman emeritus for Washington Dollars for Scholars. “Through the Community Scholarship Matching Grant program and organizations like Dollars for Scholars, we’re making higher education accessible to more students in our state.”

The matching grant generates community support for local residents pursuing higher education and is an expression of the state’s interest in supporting local fundraising.

“The state is a proud partner in our students’ college education,” said Marc Gaspard. “The Community Scholarship Matching Grant program is one way we can support the outstanding efforts under way to help students realize their full potential in earning a college degree.”

Leveraging local support for college costs helps fill the growing gap between college costs that families must pay and the financial help from colleges and other means of state support.

The Legislature has funded the program at \$251,000 for the next two years, providing awards for nearly 125 community organizations each year.

Applications currently are available at the Higher Education Coordinating Board by calling 360-753-7861. For more information about the program, visit the HECB Web site at:

[<http://www.hecb.wa.gov/grants/csmg/>](http://www.hecb.wa.gov/grants/csmg/)

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